

The Makings of a Recital

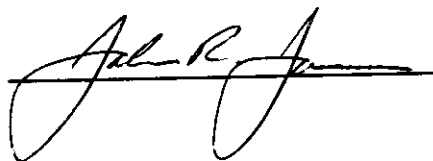
An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Thesis Advisor

Mr. John Jones

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John R. Jones", written over a horizontal line.

Ball State University

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The Makings of a Recital

Preparing for a recital is difficult. Dealing with advertisement, program notes, a journal of activities (this), plus other schoolwork is monumental. I'm not sure exactly where to begin. I think I'll start with a few suggestions on what NOT to do.

First of all, don't even think of playing a recital on another instrument in the same semester as your Honors recital. Only a bumbling idiot (like myself) would attempt two recitals in one semester. Not only did this drive me crazy, but it also cut out a full month of preparation for this Honors project. You will have enough stress with your own project; you can live without that extra resume builder.

Second, try not to do your project in the spring. Not only do you have Spring Break to interrupt your practicing, but you also must deal with the "burn-out" that typically occurs around that time of year. I would much rather be outside playing basketball or spending time with my wife. Spring Break is another story in itself. If you are fortunate enough to be able to take your horn with you, you must still somehow get inspired to actually practice the thing. Personally, I found playing Nintendo much easier than playing euphonium.

Finally, never, ever throw your mouthpiece against the wall two weeks before your recital (or any other time). I guess what I'm saying is this: relax, take a deep breath, and put your horn away. You will not play perfectly every time, so try to keep things in perspective. I get very upset when I don't play well, and one day I took my frustrations out on my \$150.00 mouthpiece. Not only did I do serious damage to the equipment, but I had to face the wrath of my private instructor during my next lesson. All around a very unhealthy experience.

The Months Before

Okay, you have decided to do your Senior Honors Project, and are probably doing a recital. Now, where do you begin? Well, as in real life, you have to deal with all of the administrative tasks the semester before you even start. You need to 1.) sign up for HONRS 499, 2.) have your teacher get you a date for your recital, and 3.) visit Joanne Edmonds at the Honors College. Once you have done these things, you can begin on an adventure you won't soon forget.

Even though you think your administrative work is finished, you have really only just begun. The first thing you must do in the semester of your recital is to check and see if any other events are scheduled the same day as your recital. When I did this, I found that the Jazz Lab Ensemble (which I am the lead

trombone player in) had a concert in Kokomo on the same evening as my recital. I had to talk to Nancy Baker (who was very cooperative) and somehow find an alternate date. Well after much searching, we finally succeeded in finding an open date, and we set the schedule.

For me, the next step was to wait. As I mentioned earlier, I was stupid enough to agree to perform a trombone recital the same semester as my Honors recital. **NEVER DO THIS!** Not only did this cause the typical stress of the recital, but it set my preparations for this project back over a month. Bad idea.

Of course, before I could practice, do program notes, or find an accompanist, I had to pick out some music to play. Depending on your own abilities, this can be done at virtually any time. If you can prepare four or more pieces in three weeks, more power to you. I personally recommend at least a few months. This allows you to have plenty of time to work on the pieces, and allows for time to find an accompanist (which is another matter altogether). When deciding on music, keep in mind some sort of program order. Also consider endurance. You don't want to play a bunch of "chop-busters," only to get tired and run out of energy at the end. Some flashy pieces are great, but need some diversity, or your audience will be really bored.

I chose the following program: Johannes Brahms's *Four Serious Songs*, Joseph Horowitz' *Concerto for Euphonium*, John Boda's *Sonatina for Euphonium and Tape*, and Simone Mantia's *Believe Me if all Those Endearing Young Charms*. I chose these pieces because of their diversity (the Brahms is very lyrical, the Horowitz and the Mantia are both flashy, and the Boda is a very modern piece) and because they are all standards of the Euphonium repertoire. Of course, the most important thing is that you actually enjoy the pieces you have chosen. Nothing is more frustrating than working for a few months on a piece of music that you can't stand.

Something else you might not have thought about is whether or not you can easily read the music you are playing. For instance, the Brahms is actually a vocal work, and is written only as a piano score with the vocal part above it. In other words, there is no actual solo part. In this case you must either purchase another copy of the music, or photocopy what you have before you give the piano score to the accompanist. I actually went a step further. I took my photocopy and copied the solo part using a computer music writing program. This is available at the School of Music, and is much easier to read than the full score. Keep this in mind.

Okay, one thing left. You must find an accompanist. Since a Senior Honors Recital is a degree related recital, you can get

one through the school of music if you wish. Although this is cheaper, it has definite drawbacks. First of all, you have no idea of the quality of player you will get. I was fortunate enough to get a very fine player. Secondly, you don't know about the attitude of the player and if the player is willing to make the necessary time commitments for a recital. This is where my accompanist was lacking. He seemed very uninterested in actually rehearsing, and was more interested in his own practicing than in getting together for my recital. He also did not even look at the music until three days before the recital date. Although the performance ended up okay, I could have done without the uncertainty of not knowing if my accompanist would play the piano part correctly. In other words, if you can afford it, pay a well-known and very good accompanist to play for you. The school of music is okay, but you never know what you will get.

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE! By now, you are around a month and a half from the big date. You should know what music you are going to play, and have the music in to the proper authorities to get an accompanist. The important thing now is to practice your parts so when you get with your accompanist, you can be completely prepared. This is the easiest part of the whole process. You should already know how to practice (and if you don't, shame on you. I really don't have time to teach you in this journal), and you can just do what comes naturally: play your horn. However, as I said earlier, don't become too

discouraged. You are only human and will make mistakes, just don't let them get to you too much. There will be days that things will simply not happen. This is okay!! Put the horn away for a while. You are bound to play better in the future.

I would personally suggest working on the program notes and the journal (such as this one, if you choose to do one) a few months before the recital if at all possible. I realize schoolwork and ensembles often conflict with this, but do your best. I waited until the last minute for both. The journal seems to have turned out okay, but the notes were a pain. I began mine about two weeks before the recital was to begin. This put me in quite a bind when I found out the Ball State library had no information on three of my composers and their respective pieces. I ended up scrapping together record covers and program notes from old recitals to get the information. I finally finished the notes two days before the recital. I was lucky. Get them done long in advance so you can concentrate solely on the music the week of the recital. Also keep in mind that you will incur some copying costs (around \$20.00?) for your program notes. This really isn't that much when you look at all of the work you will have put into them.

Three Weeks Before

At this point, I was trying desperately to recover from Spring Break. Bad situation. Try to avoid this at all costs. By now you should know your music very well, and should occasionally play through your recital on your own to see if you can make it all the way through. You also need to meet with your accompanist as often as possible during this time. If you have a problem such as mine, and your accompanist isn't prepared, don't worry. Talk to your teacher, and he/she will handle the situation. You have many more things to worry about. Just make sure you are always prepared, and play your best.

About this time you should also think about advertising. The school of music does not advertise student recitals, so if you want anyone at all there, you must do all of the advertising yourself. For starters, make some posters and hang them in the school of music and other buildings around campus. You probably won't get many non-music majors, but you never know. You should also begin talking about your recital to all of your classmates. Announce it in all of your classes and ensembles, and generally bug everyone to death about it. At least make people aware of the time and date. **DON'T FORGET TO INVITE FAMILY!!** You really have to pay attention to this one. Grandparents and other relatives love to hear you play. If you are married, invite the

in-laws. If they like you, they'll love the performance. If they hate you, they just might come to the realization that you have at least some redeeming qualities. I also decided to send formal typed invitations to various faculty that I really wanted to attend. These faculty members are often so busy, they don't always look at the calendar to see if any recitals are coming up. If you let them know, they just might come.

Now for the reality check. You are dealing with the Ball State School of Music. Nobody will show. I must have talked to two hundred people, and I mailed my invitations to my faculty. Around ten music majors came, and none of the faculty. Lots of people said they would come, but very few did. Only one of the faculty even bothered to send any reply at all to the invitation. Be prepared. Unless you are very lucky you will look at a bunch of empty seats. Count on around forty at the most. Including the fifteen relatives I had there, I only had around thirty people at mine. I can list off fifty that guaranteed me they would come and didn't. Welcome to Ball State School of Music: Home of Apathy.

Okay, back to the items at hand. This is the time that you must take care of any small details of the recital that you still have. Aside from the program notes that I put off until now to do, I still had to do many things. The first was to arrange for Central Recording to be at the recital for my third piece, the *Sonatina for Euphonium and Tape*. I actually had my

instructor, Mr. Jones, take care of this for me. We decided the people didn't need to be there for the dress rehearsal as long as I could run through the piece before the concert on the day of. No problem there. I also had to secure a stand light from Mr. Niccum for the piece (I perform it in complete darkness save a stand light). Once again, no problem.

At around this time, I began doing my program notes. As you are aware, I suggest doing them long before this, but sometimes stuff happens. Your program notes should include biographical information on the composer and some background information on the piece. If you are doing a piece transcribed from a vocal work or based on a vocal work, you really should include the lyrics, translated into English. Along with this journal should be a copy of my own program notes. Keep in mind, these will reflect you, so make them very neat and professional.

Everything seemed to be going smoothly until the day I, for some as yet unexplained reason, could no longer play any of the music. This is when the aforementioned mouthpiece throwing incident occurred. Once again I say, DON'T LET THE STRESS GET TO YOU!!!!!! The only other thing that seemed wrong was that I had yet to meet with my accompanist. We didn't meet until the week before the recital. This really was a scary scene. I had no idea how the pieces were going to go. Meet early and often with the accompanist for maximum security.

The Last Week

You are in the home stretch. By now, you should be able to play the whole recital perfectly. Chances are, if you don't know the music by now, you never will. The important thing here is to avoid the temptation to practice fifteen hours a day. I prefer the philosophy of Heavy day/Light day. Since my recital is on Saturday, I start on Monday with a heavy day. I play the recital through at least twice (preferably with my accompanist), and also play in my respective ensembles. On Tuesday, I lighten up a little. I still play through the recital, but only once this time. As the week progresses, I continue this pattern until Friday. By this time you should have the endurance to play the recital with no problem, so once again take it easy. Obviously, this will give you two consecutive light days. Keep in mind, however, that you will perform your dress rehearsal this night, so you still have two hours of playing at the end of the day. You will play enough to keep the chops going.

This last week is also for taking care of any last minute preparations for the recital date. If you are planning a reception (in my case my wife planned it), you should purchase the beverages/snacks during the week. Don't wait until the day of the recital, you never know when the stores might mysteriously be out of pop. This is also when you need to do your big verbal advertising. People will not come simply because of your posters

or an invitation extended a few weeks ago. You need to remind them on a daily basis. Finally, make sure Central Recording will be there when you need them to. I decided that I didn't need them for my dress rehearsal, since I had performed the piece twice before in the hall. They agreed to be there forty-five minutes early on the recital date to make a quick runthrough and level check on the Boda.

The last thing to worry about is the dress. You must show up late at night, be prepared to play, and be nearly perfect. You must somehow adjust to the barn (A.K.A. Pruis Hall) when you have been practicing in a tiny practice room for three months. As far as the music is concerned, your teacher will deal with that part, and I am hardly qualified to instruct you on this front. I can, however, give you a few suggestions about other things. First of all, don't forget to discuss attire with your accompanist. If you are wearing a tux, let him/her know. The two of you should pretty much match. Also, discuss with the back stage person any special needs (the shell, an extra stand for mutes, an unusual setup for a chamber ensemble, etc...). I always like to have a friend out in the audience to give an additional viewpoint. There is a danger here, though. This friend must be willing to offer criticisms. If this person only tells you how wonderful you are, he/she is a waste of time. He/she must be helpful and assist in a musically professional manner. If you don't know anyone like this, then either forget

about it or call me. The most important thing about the dress is to not hold back. If you are "saving it" for the following day, your teacher can never adjust the dynamic levels and balance between you and the accompanist. Play just as you will on the actual recital. Go home and get a good night's sleep.

The Day!

You've finally made it. Tough road, huh. Well don't worry, you aren't out of trouble yet. Plenty more can go wrong. But first, you have an entire day to get through before you play. If you play during the week, go to class. If you are like me, and have a full schedule from 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. eight days a week, the class time will surely go by faster than sitting around at home. Whatever you do, avoid the temptation to sit in a practice room for the whole day and practice your recital. As I said earlier, you aren't going to pick up anything more, and will probably just end up tiring out. If you must play in ensembles, let the director know that you have a recital, and don't play too hard. Don't ask to be excused. If your chops are so weak that you can't stand to attend your normal rehearsals, you are in big trouble. Plus, skipping a rehearsal for a recital is a sure way to get Dr. Scagnoli really mad. Just go to class. If you play on a Saturday or don't have classes on the day of the show, relax, play some video games, and chill. Warm up a little in the morning, and let the chops rest. But whatever you do, don't do

nothing. Keep your mind busy. You will have plenty of time to stress out before you go on stage.

When the time finally comes, make sure you have all of the essentials: stand light, program notes, music, mouthpiece, valve oil, water bottle, YOUR HORN!!, and anything else you might require. Now that everything is in order, let me tell you about the best laid plans of mice and musicians.

I arrived at Pruis at around 4:45 so I could warm up and run through the Boda. As I said earlier, the people from Central Recording agreed to be there early for this exact purpose. Well, nobody was there. The backstage attendant and the tuba graduate assistant tried in vain to get hold of someone to not only play my taped piece, but to make a copy of the recital for my future use (my teacher, Mr. Jones, was at a rehearsal, and would not arrive until just before the recital was to begin). I finally went out to the lobby and had my wife go home to get my stereo so I could at least play the whole recital, even if I couldn't record it. Needless to say, this didn't do much for my nerves. Finally, at 5:27, someone arrived. Of course, it took him ten minutes to set up, and I still had to run through the piece once to check levels. I finally started the recital around twenty-five minutes late. WEEEEEE!!!

As you can see, even if you are completely prepared, you might just have something go wrong. I really hate having to rely

upon others for the success of my things. Well, obviously things worked out, and I played the recital.

People have different philosophies about what to think about when on stage. I prefer to concentrate primarily on my breathing, and let the music influence any other thoughts. During pretty lyrical sections, I usually think of my wife. Other times, I wonder if some technical passage sounded as good (or bad) in the audience as it did to me. The important thing is to do what makes you most relaxed and helps you play the best. Some people think strictly about the music. This ruins me. I end up worrying about difficult sections, and make a lot more mistakes. But as I said, each person is different. I just prefer to let my mind wander a bit. I think it helps loosen me up.

No matter what you do, you will make mistakes. Nobody is perfect, and you are no exception. You also might encounter problems with the accompanist. If the two of you get off from each other, you can be in real trouble. All I can say is, "Keep Going!!!!" If you keep going, your accompanist will eventually find you. Often, the audience won't even notice you were off. This happened in my recital. We were off for around six measures, then he dropped out to find me. Had we not maintained a professional attitude, this could have been disastrous, but we were able to work through it and the audience never suspected.

This leads me to another point. Never let the audience know you make a mistake. Don't live in the past. Even if you totally blow a lick, keep playing, don't frown or grunt, and play confidently. Most of the audience will never know unless you tell them.

When you have played your final piece, take a curtain call. You deserve it. But remember, wait five seconds after you come off stage before you head back out. Also, be prepared for the onslaught of "Great Job!"'s that will inevitably come your way. Even though you will probably feel you played terribly, smile and say thanks. As I said, if you didn't show the audience all of your mistakes, they probably had no idea. Congratulations of a job well done.

The Aftermath

Now what. Well, you must assemble everything and turn it in. If you did a journal along the way, your probably pretty much done. If not, get to work. Whatever you do, wait a week or two before you order your recording. You need a little time to forget all of your mistakes. Otherwise you will be overly critical of the performance. Finally, you must turn the whole thing in to the Honors College. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself, and look it over in a few years. It will bring back quite a few memories, I'm sure. I know mine will. Above all,

Lemen 16

remember that this is something for you to be proud of. You have worked hard and deserve all of the praise you get. Oh, by the way, feel free to take a listen to my tape, I think you'll find it at worst interesting. I had a good recital.

Paul Lemen

**BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

PAUL LEMEN
euphonium
in a
SENIOR HONORS RECITAL
assisted by
Bernard Sell, piano

Vier Ernste Gesänge Op. 121
(Four Serious Songs)

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

- I. Denn es geht dem Menschen wie dem Vieh
- II. Ich wandte mich und sahe
- III. O Tod, wie bitter bist du
- IV. Wenn ich mit Menschen und mit Engelzungen redete

Euphonium Concerto

Joseph Horowitz
(b.1926)

- I. Moderato
- II. Adagio
- III. Con Moto

... Intermission ...

Sonatina for Euphonium and Tape

John Boda
(b.1922)

Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms

Simone Mantia
arr. David Werden

This recital is dedicated to my wonderful wife, Jeanne.

Paul Lemen is a student of John Jones
and is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia,
National Professional Fraternity for men in the field of music.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Honors Program at Ball State University.

PRUIS HALL
Saturday, April 3, 1993
5:30 p.m.

Series XLVII
Number 160

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Program Notes
Paul Lemen, Euphonium
Senior Honors Recital
April 3, 1993

Vier Ernste Gesange Op. 121
(Four Serious Songs)

Johannes Brahms

Vier Ernste Gesange Op. 121 was the last work published by Johannes Brahms in his lifetime. Although some feel it might have been a gesture to his own mortality, it was more likely a tribute to his dying love, Clara Schumann. Her illness and death filled him with great remorse and dread. In it he demonstrates his feelings about death. Instead of using the hopeful text of the New Testament, he chose the Old Testament books of Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus for the text in the first three songs. These demonstrate his basic outlook at the futility of human life and the bitterness of death. *Vier Ernste Gesange* also spells the end of the grand era of the German Lied. Although many composers again used Lieder in their works, Brahms was the final of the great composers of the Lied.

Ecclesiastes, III.

One thing befalleth the beasts and sons of men; the beast must die, the man must dieth also, yea, both must die; to beast and man one breath is given, and the man is not above the beast; for all things are but vanity. They all go to the self same place, for they all are of the dust, and to the dust they return. Who knoweth if a man's spirit goeth upwards? And who knoweth if the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth, downward to the earth? Therefore, I perceive there is no better thing for a man to rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion. For who shall ever show him, who shall show him what will happen after him?

Ecclesiastes, IV.

So I returned and did consider all the oppressions done beneath the sun, all the oppressions done beneath the sun. And there was weeping, weeping and wailing, wailing from those that were oppressed, and had no comfort; for with their oppressors there was power, so that no one, no one came to comfort them. Then I did praise the dead which are already dead, year, more than the living which linger still in life, yea he that is not is better than dead or living; for he doth not know of the evil that is wrought forever on earth.

Ecclesiasticus, 41.

O death; O death, how bitter, how bitter art thou unto him that dwelleth in peace, that dwelleth in peace, to him that hath joy in his possessions, and liveth free from trouble to him whose ways are prosperous in all things, to him that still may eat! O death, O death how bitter, how bitter art thou. O death, how welcome thy call to him that is in want and whose strength doth fail him and whose life is but a pain, who hath nothing to hope for and cannot look for relief! O death, O death how welcome art thou! How welcome is thy call!

I Corinthians, XIII.

Though I speak with the tongues of men, and of the angels, and have not charity, then am I become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I can prophesy, and understand all mysteries, am powerful in knowledge, and though I have the gift faith and can move the mountains, and have not charity, yet am I nothing worth, yet am I nothing worth. And though I give my worldly good to feed the poor, and though I give my fleshly body, my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing, it profiteth me nothing. For now we see the word darkly as through a glass, but then we shall see it, we shall see it face to face. Here I know but partly, but there I surely shall know it, even as I am also known. Now abideth faith, and hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of them all is charity, the greatest, the greatest of these is charity.

Sonatina for Euphonium and Synthesizer

John Boda

John Boda has served on the faculty of Florida State University since 1947. He received his Bachelors degree from Kent State University and his Masters and Doctorate from the prestigious Eastman School of Music. In 1946, he won a national competition to become the apprentice conductor of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Boda composed the *Sonatina for Euphonium and Synthesizer* in 1972. Two years later, he re-arranged the work for piano and euphonium, the arrangement the composer prefers. The piece is in a fast-slow-fast, three movement form. Although extended cadenzas separate each section, pauses are not included between the movements. In the recapitulation of the original melody in the first fast section, the melody is presented on the tape by another euphonium playing in duet with the performer. This part was recorded by Dr. Earle Louder, distinguished professor of music at Morehead State University.

Concerto for Euphonium

Joseph Horowitz

Joseph Horowitz is a British composer born in 1926. His primary contributions to the musical world have been in the form of Brass Band music. The *Concerto for Euphonium* was originally written for that purpose. According to the composer, this edition, with the piano score replacing the full brass band, is only an outline of the actual accompaniment. The concerto was commissioned by the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, and premiered by the G.U.S. Footwear Band and euphonium soloist Trevor Croom on October 14, 1972.

The three movement structure of the concerto represents the composer's classical outlook concerning concertos. The piece, according to Horowitz, "...favours the listener, as it were, first in the head, then in the heart, and finally in the foot." The second movement contains the lone cadenza of the piece, which the composer dedicates to the mysteriously beautiful border-country. Following the completion of the work, the composer found that the final resolutions of each movement followed the key pattern C-D-E-flat, even though the piece was originally supposed to be in the key of c-minor throughout. "It seems that the initial idea of a concerto in c-minor was guided by the kindly hand of the Goddess of Tonality--long may she prosper!"--Joseph Horowitz.

Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms

Simone Mantia

Simone Mantia (1873-1951) was one of the premiere euphonium soloists of all time. As the soloist for the band of John Philip Sousa, he consistently dazzled audiences with his incredible technical abilities and great musicality. Also an excellent trombone player, he often substituted as trombone soloist for Arthur Pryor in Sousa's band. Mantia later served as assistant conductor for Pryor's band.

Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms is a short written by Irish composer/poet Thomas Moore (1779-1852) as a part of a publication entitled "Irish Melodies." Simone Mantia made the piece famous as a euphonium solo when he arranged it as a theme with three variations to display his incredible technical ability. In 1987, David R. Werden, euphonium soloist for the United State Coast Guard Band, published this arrangement after adding his own original cadenzas.

Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms

*Believe me if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly today,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away.
Though wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart,
Would entwine itself verdantly still.*

*It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervor and faith of a soul may be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear!
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns to her God when he sets,
The same look which she turned when he rose!*

--Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

History of the Euphonium

The euphonium is a valved instrument approximately nine feet in length that plays in the same octave as the trombone. Instruments of this variety began appearing in Germany around 1830. There have always been two basic sizes of the horn. The larger horn was termed the *euphonium* in England, while the smaller was termed the *baryton*. These names became standard in the United States early in the twentieth century. In other countries, the instrument is known by such names as *saxhorn basse* and *saxhorn baritone* in France, and *Baryton* and *Barytonhorn* or *Baryton B* in Germany. Each of these instruments is basically the same thing.

The euphonium and the baritone began seeing extensive use in military, community, and school bands in the 19th century. During the late 19th century, the euphonium became widespread as a solo instrument with many exciting band parts and virtuoso solo parts written for it. Unfortunately, the euphonium has yet to make a significant impression in the orchestral idiom. Only a few pieces have been written with this instrument in mind. Strauss' *Don Quixote* and Holst's *The Planets* are two of the best known examples of the orchestral literature for euphonium.